

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Nichols

Norman Thomas

DATE: March 11, 1954

Tolson
Ladd
Nichols
Belmont
Clegg
Glavin
Harbo
Rosen
Tracy
Gearty
Mohr
Winterrowd
Tele. Room
Holloman
Sizoo
Miss Gandy

FROM : Mr. A. Jones

SUBJECT: "THE AUTHOR MEETS THE CRITICS"
WTTG-TV, CHANNEL 5, 7:00 P.M., FEBRUARY 28, 1954
DISCUSSION OF "THE TEST OF FREEDOM" BOOK
BY NORMAN THOMAS

G. I. R. 27

The captioned television show was monitored by Crime Records Section.

The moderator, Virgilia Peterson, introduced the book as the most recent study of the state of freedom in our nation. Norman Thomas described his book as a discussion of the closely related evils of Communism and McCarthyism. He stated that he would now suspend the three Congressional Committees which are competing and replace them with a bipartisan Presidential Committee to handle the job of finding our way out of the present morass.

Lawrence Fertig, of the New York World Telegram and Sun, criticized the book mainly because it supported "left wingers" who have used "McCarthyism" as a smear word. Max Lerner, of the New York Post, defended the book and its discussion on the twin evils of Communism and the incipient form of Fascism known as McCarthyism.

Fertig objected to the continual hostility to honest investigations by committees and the frequent remark, "Let the FBI investigate." He stated that in the Harry Dexter White case the public should have been informed in good democratic fashion of the facts contained in the two FBI reports. He said these two reports were significant and showed laxity in the Administration. He stated that for the book to call Attorney General Brownell's action in the White case "McCarthyism" is to smear without justification.

Thomas stated that the book's criticism of Brownell was just in that Brownell's timing and his choice of Chicagoland to air the White case was not right. He stated Truman fought Communism when no Republican was doing so. He advised that Brownell's actions brought serious damage to FBI reports.

There was considerable personal argument between Fertig and Lerner which appeared to be outside of the book under discussion.

RECOMMENDATION:

None. For information.

MAR 15 1954
EMV:rcw

RECORDED - 3
INDEXED - 3

MAR 5 1954

61-10767-26

UNRECORDED COPY FILED IN

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Nichols

DATE: June 14, 1954

FROM : M. A. Jones

SUBJECT: "THE TEST OF FREEDOM"
By NORMAN THOMAS
BOOK REVIEW

SYNOPSIS: Book Review of above

This memo summarizes the captioned book which was copyrighted 1954 and which is being maintained in the Bureau Library. There are no direct and strong criticisms of the FBI. The Attorney General's activities in connection with the Harry Dexter White case are criticized, and it is noted that FBI reports fell short of completely legal proof of guilt. Thomas indicated that the FBI had been dragged into the White case as a "quasi-policymaking agency" and that policy making is not the function of the police, "least of all the secret police." He wrote that the FBI, among others, had ignored in practice the distinction between conspiracy on one hand and heresy or dissent from popularly accepted belief on the other. Thomas questioned the FBI's estimate of danger of Communists since public opinion now is so strong against Communism. Thomas stated that the Director had placed Communist Party membership at about 21,000. The correct figure would be about 24,000. He mentioned that the Director had estimated ten fellow travelers for every Communist. The Director has on several occasions stated that the Communists have claimed this ratio. The main inquiry in this book was into the application of Jeffersonian principles of freedom of speech, press and association and the right of due process. This book pointed out fallacies of Communism and dangers of McCarthyism. According to Thomas, McCarthyism is more of a challenge to Jeffersonian ideals than Communism in this country. Thomas criticized the McCarran and Smith Acts and suggested they be replaced. Thomas criticized legislative inquiries into subversion and recommended a special committee of distinguished citizens for this purpose. He wrote that the Communists got the martyrs they wanted in the Rosenberg case and that the sentence should have been commuted since the conspiracy was to aid an ally. He concluded with the statement, "neither Communism nor McCarthyism is the end to the American dream."

RECOMMENDATION:

None. For information.

COPIES DESTROYED

78 JUN 21 1961

EMV:jbg

RECORDED.
INDEXED.

61-10167-27

I hope Thomas' Socialism
isn't the end of the American dream

Tolson
Ladd
Nichols
Belmont
Clegg
Glavin
Harbo
Rosen
Tracy
Mohr
Trotter
Winterrowd
Tele. Room
Holloman
Miss Gandy

Memorandum to Mr. Nichols

June 14, 1954.

DETAILS

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize briefly the book entitled "The Test of Freedom," by Norman Thomas, published by W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., Copyright 1954, which is being maintained in the Bureau's Library.

IDENTITY OF AUTHOR:

Norman Thomas is a well-known individual who was the Socialist Party candidate for President from 1928 until 1948. He is the author of a number of books and pamphlets. His address is 39A Gramercy Park, New York City.
(Who's Who in America 1954-55)

CRITICAL REFERENCES TO FBI:

There are no references in this book which can be termed direct and strong criticism of the FBI. The following statements are critical to some degree:

(1) Page 10. Thomas discusses in the Preface the Harry Dexter White case and the recent activities of Attorney General Brownell in connection with that case. In connection with FBI reports on White, Thomas stated that "FBI charges admittedly fell short of completely legal proof of guilt." He stated that an ominous precedent was set by dragging the FBI into the White case as a "quasi-policymaking agency." He added that policy making is not the function of the police "least of all the secret police."

(2) Page 82. Thomas wrote that "high government officials, the FBI, Congressional investigating committees, and plain citizens in their efforts to discover subversion and drag conspiracy into the open are under imperative obligation, as Sidney Hook has ably insisted, sharply to distinguish between heresy, or dissent from popularly accepted belief, and conspiracy--an obligation sadly ignored in practice."

(3) Page 112. The FBI's estimate of the dangers of Communism in this country is questioned by Thomas because the tides of public opinion now run so strongly against Communism.

June 14, 1954

OTHER REFERENCES TO FBI:

The FBI and the Director are mentioned a number of times in this book and the more important references are set out under this section.

(1) Page 62. The Director is quoted as placing the Communist Party membership at about 21,000. This figure apparently is mistaken since the Director placed the membership at approximately 24,000 as of September 30, 1953. (Reprint entitled "Where Do We Stand Today with Communism in the U. S.?" from The American Legion Magazine, March, 1954)

Thomas stated that the Director had estimated that there were ten fellow travelers or persons strongly influenced by Communism for every Communist. It is noted that the Director has said several times that the Communists make this claim themselves. (Testimony of the Director before the House Subcommittee on Appropriations, February 25, 1953.)

(2) Page 81. Thomas wrote that the government is obligated to keep under the active watchfulness of the FBI the record of American Communism and the crimes committed in its name.

(3) Page 83. The Director and others are credited with the estimate that there are between 700,000 and 1,000,000 ex-members or disciplined adherents of Communism in America. The Director stated that there are an estimated 1,000,000 persons other than Communist Party members who in one way or another aid the Communist Party. (Reprint entitled "How to Fight Communism" from Newsweek of June 9, 1947)

(4) Page 103. Thomas stated that there is no "well-grounded criticism" concerning the necessity for the FBI, that its past procedures have usually been proper and that the Director's voice has usually been raised for reason.

(5) Page 124. In discussing the need for official inquiry into acts of disloyalty and subversion, the legal remedies for these acts and punishment of them, Thomas stated that the FBI was properly prohibited by law from conducting such inquiry on its own authority and prohibited from giving publicity to the results of its inquiries.

(6) Page 177. Thomas discussed the "book burning" which was a State Department problem in the overseas libraries recently. He criticized unrestricted book burning and stated that it looked as if the FBI might have to conduct a loyalty inquiry on Mark Twain.

Memorandum to Mr. Nichols

June 14, 1954

REVIEW OF THE BOOK:

Preface

Thomas here discusses the fact that Attorney General Brownell "raised the ghost of Harry Dexter White." Thomas stated that the Attorney General would have been justified in this action only if thereby he could bring to justice guilty men now living or if he could learn how better to protect the administration from Communist penetration and espionage. Thomas questions whether the Attorney General accomplished this. Thomas indicates that the Director was dragged into this controversy by Brownell.

Chapter I Introducing the Subject and the Author

Thomas declared that his book is an inquiry into the application of Jeffersonian principles of freedom of speech, the press and association and the right of due process. He traces his own development into becoming a Socialist.

Thomas' eyes were opened to the true nature of Communism by the purgetrials of 1936-1938 and Communist intrigues for power in loyalist Spain during the Civil War.

Chapter II The Jeffersonian Ideal in Practice

In this chapter Thomas traces the history and growth of civil liberties in the United States. He stated that there was no excuse and no moral justification for the wholesale evacuation of Japanese and Japanese-Americans from the West Coast without trial or hearing at the beginning of World War II.

Chapter III Communism, the Foe of Freedom

The historical growth of Communism and many of its fallacies are reported in this chapter.

Thomas stated that in the Fall of 1946 Senator McCarthy "thought it both safe and advisable to accept without protest or even explanation communist and pro-communist support in the 'open' Republican primary in order to defeat Robert LaFollette, Jr., for the senatorial nomination." "McCarthyism is really the ally of the foe it purports to fight," according to Thomas.

Chapter IV American Communism and Liberty

Thomas declared that Communist strength is at a low ebb in the United States today but it is not negligible.

June 14, 1954

He cites the fact that there are seven unions which are dominated by Communism and that these unions have a total membership of between 300,000 and 400,000.

The Attorney General's list (that prepared on Executive Order 10450) is open to criticism, according to Thomas. Thomas admits that most of the organizations on the Attorney General's list were started or were captured by Communists. He stated that lists compiled by state authorities are worse than lists compiled by the Attorney General.

Thomas stated that among the worst of the McCarthyist stupidities is the insistence that Communism is an unforgivable sin or a sin redeemable only by becoming an informer.

Chapter V What Should We Have Done?

Thomas reported that the Liberals committed a serious error when they long minimized the Communist evil. He added that this error contributed to the rise of McCarthyism. Communism has occasioned the rise of McCarthyism, according to Thomas. He reported that within the U. S., McCarthyism is a "more widespread challenge to the Jeffersonian ideal than Communism." He declared that McCarthyism is a kind of sixth column in support of Stalin's successors and that "it too must be fought."

Thomas stated that Louis Budenz has given little trustworthy information on Communism and that this fact is probably because major leaders kept Budenz from knowing much more than gossip during his activity in the Communist Party.

Thomas states that there are certain rights which Communists, who are still loyal to the Communist Party, should possess under our theory of freedom and he reported that they are as follows:

1. Due process of law.
2. Private and secret speech regarding the advisability of changes in government should be protected so long as such discussion does not involve "an overt act" in criminal conspiracy.
3. The Communist Party should not be outlawed according to sound public policy. Thomas stated here that outlawry of the Communist Party would make it harder for the FBI to keep tabs on Communist thought and activity.

June 14, 1954

4. Thomas stated that, if it is unsound to outlaw the Communist Party by direct legislation, it is unsound to reach the same end by such methods as the McCarran Internal Security Act and the Smith Act. He stated that the McCarran Act places requirements on the Communist Party which are impossible to fulfill and the Smith Act has sent successive waves of Communist Party leaders to jail by trials.

5. Thomas stated that Communists have a right to work but not in positions where espionage and so forth are possible. He reported that there can be no objection to Communists acting in plays, or ^{on} the radio or on television which is in the open and which action can be judged on its own merits. He declared, however, that Communists have no right to teach. Thomas concludes this chapter with the statement that he does not approve the clumsy laws and administrative procedures which have been invoked to save us from Communism.

Chapter VI McCarthyism and Liberty

According to Thomas, McCarthy has made himself "the symbol of militant opposition to insidious disloyalty" in the public mind. Senator McCarthy is discussed in this chapter and his rise to his present position in national affairs.

Thomas declared that the fear and suspicion which McCarthyism expresses and increases is the worst feature of McCarthyism.

Chapter VII The Smith and McCarran Acts

These two Acts are discussed by Thomas in this chapter. Trials under the Smith Act are discussed. Thomas stated that about the best that can be said for the trials in 1948 of the 11 top Communist leaders is that these trials have established many important facts about organized Communism. He noted that these facts were available years ago at a lower price to our country and its ideals. He declared that these trials have not made the United States safer against its enemies and that they have not strengthened a popular sense of security.

Thomas recommended that the Smith Act be replaced by a comprehensive law on sedition which would make it an offense (1) for an individual or a group to teach espionage or sabotage of security operations, (2) for a private, secret or semi-secret military body to be advocated or formed, (3) for an individual or conspiratorial group to advocate acts of force or violence immediately directed to the overthrow of the government on any level.

Memorandum to Mr. Nichols

June 14, 1954

According to Thomas, the McCarran Act has some good features but in effect "it is a clumsy and expensive indirect way of outlawing the Communist Party and various of its fronts."

Chapter VIII Legislative Investigations and Individual Rights

Thomas reported that, "Congress has, on the whole, served the public interest well by legislative inquiry." He stated that it is a legitimate legislative inquiry to make inquiry into acts but that inquiry into opinions and beliefs is not legitimate.

Thomas discussed in this chapter the history of Congressional inquiries which started with the 1938 Special Committee on Un-American Activities of the House. Thomas admitted that Communist activities must be the subject of inquiry but he suggests that the proper method of inquiry would be through a commission of distinguished citizens appointed especially for this purpose.

According to Thomas, present criticism of Congressional inquiries is directed toward the subject matter of investigations, the technical procedures, and the efforts to manipulate publicity to catch headlines and to gain personal or partisan advantage. Thomas criticized the House Committee on Un-American Activities for its fishing expedition into loyalty in churches.

Thomas stated that there is a great need for procedural reform in Congressional inquiries. He again criticized the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations with the statement that hearings often come after an organization has been listed and after the damage has been done. Thomas pointed out that there is no legal justification for claims of rights under the Fifth Amendment on the part of innocent people. He added, however, that it would be well for committees to respect reluctance of citizens and to refrain from contempt citations unless there is involved very grave danger to peace and safety.

Chapter IX Loyalty and Security Tests

Thomas stated that the Rosenbergs were guilty but that their sentences should have been commuted since the conspiracy was to aid an ally. The Communists got the martyrs they wanted, according to Thomas. He added that the "Communists prefer unjust convictions or convictions which can be exploited rather than acquittals at the hands of 'capitalist' courts." The Communists have no fear that the Rosenbergs will talk, according to Thomas.

June 14, 1954

Thomas stated that the accused should have certain protections which he does not now have. The protections should be as follows.

1. Hearing boards should not be designated from within government departments by department heads but should be appointed by Federal courts from distinguished members of the bar or others specially qualified who are not dependent upon the favor of department heads.

2. Such boards should be given great latitude to examine confidential informants.

3. Boards should be allowed to recommend transfer to less sensitive jobs when the question is on competence and trustworthiness and not on loyalty.

4. An employee should be continued for a reasonable time at his work so that he can prepare his defense instead of being suspended as soon as formal charges are posted.

Chapter I McCarthyism at State and Local Levels

Thomas discussed here certain state statutes and enforcement in the field of security. He stated that the states have been effective to a degree in enforcing penalties against "subversive" organization and that their chief activity has been in the field of loyalty oaths. Thomas reported that loyalty oaths have caught no secret Communists. According to Thomas, the evidence in our public schools does not warrant a general anti-Communist crusade in that field. He stated that the teaching profession should judge the books used as texts in schools.

Chapter II Unions, Radio-TV, and Communist Suspects

Thomas stated that Communists "are not barred from membership in most unions at least as long as the Communist does not employ tactics which originally got the Communist in trouble." He added that some unions bar Communists from office and a few bar them from membership. Thomas stated that he doubted that the Taft-Hartley Act had helped the situation by requiring officers of unions to take non-Communists oaths. Thomas asked "Are not Communism and McCarthyism sisters under the skin in respect to intolerance?"

Chapter III The Future of Freedom

Thomas declared that a continuance in the present trend would lead us to the point where we would risk losing to our enemy by our very contempt for freedom which first aroused our fears.

Memorandum to Mr. Nichols

June 14, 1954

According to Thomas, the American government is terribly handicapped by the burden of McCarthyism as it enters into the new feeling about Russia and Communism in the West. Thomas stated that at worst the evolution in Russia toward reasonableness and in America toward McCarthyism would lead to police states in both countries which would sooner or later drench the earth in blood. Thomas concluded his book with the statement that "it is for us to prove that neither Communism nor McCarthyism is the end of the American dream."

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Tolson

DATE: 1-24-56

FROM : L.B. Nichols

SUBJECT:

Tolson ☒
Nichols ☒
Boardman ☒
Belmont ☒
Mason ☒
Mohr ☒
Parsons ☒
Rosen ☒
Tamm ☒
Nease ☒
Winterrowd ☒
Tele. Room ☒
Holloman ☒
Gandy ☒

Irving Ferman called me on April 23 to advise that the Sobell Committee is stepping up their campaign and is sending letters pertaining to the letters of Professor Perkins, Ferman and Green addressed to Bertrand Russell, claiming that the Ferman letter and the Perkins letter are incomplete. They have been making a play to Norman Thomas.

Ferman, on the other hand, has been seeking to counteract this and states he has been making considerable headway. Ferman stated that he thought that it would be very helpful if I could sit down with Norman Thomas on Saturday April 28, when Thomas was in town for a few moments to discuss this over-all problem with him. Ferman stated that he could guarantee that such a conference would be off the record if we so desired.

I told him I would be very happy to see Thomas if he felt it would do any good. I do not know whether this is a waste of time, but certainly no harm could come from it.

LBN:hpf
(2)

*nothing is to be gained
in talking with Thomas -
he is a socialist which
is a light pink Communist.
always ready to ripen into a Red
one.*

RECORDED-11

INDEXED-11

EX-134

23
50 MAY 11 1956

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Mr. Tolson

DATE 4/26/56

FROM : L. B. Nichols

SUBJECT:

Tolson	☒
Nichols	☒
Boardman	☐
Belmont	☐
Mason	☐
Mohr	☐
Parsons	☐
Rosen	☐
Tamm	☐
Nease	☐
Winterrowd	☐
Tele. Room	☐
Holloman	☐
Gandy	☐

With reference to the Director's notation that nothing can be gained by talking with Norman Thomas, I frankly did not realish the idea of even seeing Thomas, however, I agreed to do so primarily because Irving Ferman thinks he is making headway with him. I just wonder now after having agreed to see Thomas if we might not do more harm by canceling the appointment than by going ahead and seeing him.

LBN:fc
(2)

I suggest Nichols indicate he will not be available

Since appointment has been made go ahead with it.

Beckwith Memo on Norman Thomas, MA Jones to Mr. Nichols 4/27/56. gws

RECORDED-11

MAY 11 1956

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO :

Mr. Tolson *V. D. 2*

DATE: 5/1/56

FROM :

L. B. Nichols *LB*

SUBJECT:

NORMAN THOMAS

Tolson	_____
Nichols	_____
Boardman	_____
Belmont	_____
Mason	_____
Mohr	_____
Parsons	_____
Rosen	_____
Tamm	_____
Nease	_____
Winterrowd	_____
Tele. Room	_____
Holloman	_____
Gandy	_____

On Saturday, 4/28/56, I saw Norman Thomas and Irving Ferman, the Washington representative of the American Civil Liberties Union. This turned out to be more of a courtesy call than anything else.

Norman Thomas stated that he had never quarreled too violently with the FBI; that on the other hand, he had always felt the FBI did an honest job although he flatly did not like the Smith Act and opposed everything connected with the Smith Act, however, there was nothing personal so far as the Bureau is concerned, it was just his own personal feelings which he conceded could be wrong.

Thomas brought up on his own volition the Committee to Free Sobell and stated that a lot of people had been pushing him to take up the cudgels of this committee. I told Thomas that I naturally had followed his career over the years with a great deal of interest; that I certainly admired the strong stand he had taken against communist infiltration of our educational institutions; that the one thing that I could never quite reconcile was how he could be used by the communists as he had on innumerable occasions over the years. He stated that he was up on the tricks of the communists; that there were some things that he frankly agreed with the communists on. He cited as one of them the Smith Act. I told him that this, of course, was understandable but the thing that I could not understand was how he, a minister of the Gospel, would fraternize with the tools of the Devil and the instrumentality seeking to obliterate the present day Christian culture. Thomas denied that he would ever help the communists in any such activity as this.

I reminded him of the Leninist concept that the communists will build communism with non-communist hands and pointed out that over the years he had been a very articulate voice; that for example, we had had reports from high levels in the Party wherein Party leaders boasted of their ability to utilize people like Thomas and I mentioned the Amnesty Petition. Thomas stated that Si Gerson had talked to him on several occasions; that he never thought that he was being used to play a communist game but if they thought that he was, then he would fool them. He then pointed out that he had maneuvered Dennis into an appearance

cc - Mr. Boardman
Mr. Belmont

LBN:fc (4)

RECORDED - 15

MAY 17 1956

2.
3
4
5
6
7
8 Memorandum for Mr. Tolson from L. B. Nichols
9 RE: NORMAN THOMAS

5/1/56

10
11
12 at a meeting of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; that he would use this as a
13 forum to ask the communists all the embarrassing questions that he could; that
14 if I were to follow on the proceedings it would be crystal clear as to exactly
15 what his position is. I told him this was very interesting.
16
17

18 He then raised the question about the disappearance of
19 Dr. Jesus De Galindez and why the Bureau did not investigate it. I told
20 Thomas that this had been answered publicly by Assistant Attorney General
21 Oleny who in his communication to advocates of the investigation had stated
22 that the FBI has kept in close touch with the New York Police Department
23 on the matter; that no evidence has been developed reflecting a Federal
24 violation; that the FBI was following the case and was prepared to take action
25 should facts be developed indicating Federal jurisdiction. I then pointed out
26 to Thomas that one thing that it was rather difficult to reconcile was the position
27 of the true liberals on opposition to a national police; that perhaps the
28 foremost opponent to national police in the entire United States, including our
29 liberal forces, is the Director himself; that every time the FBI is pushed into
30 a situation where there is no Federal jurisdiction, then one more precedent
31 is being created on behalf of the national police concept. Thomas had never
32 thought of this. He conceded the Bureau's position was correct.
33
34
35

36 Thomas then pointed out that what he complained of was that
37 letters had been written to the Attorney General and never answered. I told
38 him that this was not true; that the Department to my own certain knowledge
39 answered certain letters that had been directed to it pointing out that there
40 were no facts indicating a Federal violation; that if any developed the FBI would
41 take action. He then asked why this could not be made public. I told him that
42 as I had already informed him they had been made public. He then asked if I
43 could tell him to whom the letters were sent. I told him I would have to check
44 and I would be glad to inform him. I am advising Irving Ferman that letters
45 were sent to James C. Stahlman, President, Inter-American Press Association,
46 and Norman De Weaver, Executive Secretary, American Catholic Trade Union
47 Committee on 3/22/56; that an item to this effect was carried on the United Press
48 ticker on 3/27/56. I asked Thomas, when he was complaining about never getting
49 replies, if he had written a letter to the Bureau and never received an answer.
50 He stated that he had not.
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

2.
3
4
5
6
7
8 Memorandum for Mr. Tolson from L. B. Nichols
9 RE: NORMAN THOMAS
10

5/1/56

11
12 He then stated that he has become interested in George Dasch,
13 one of the eight German saboteurs, and that he could not understand why the
14 Attorney General would not waive the silly immigration requirement which
15 bars him from returning to the United States and why he could not be given
16 a full pardon. I told Thomas that Dasch had been sentenced to be executed
17 by the Military Tribunal; that the Director had recommended leniency; that
18 the sentence had been commuted when he was deported; that he went immediately
19 into the Russian zone and I asked Thomas if this were the type of person that he
20 was trying to get into the United States. Thomas stated that it was not; that
21 he never knew this; that this threw additional light on the matter and he asked
22 if I could advise him how long Dasch was in the Russian zone. I told him I
23 would be glad to do this. I am getting the facts and will advise Irving Ferman.
24
25
26
27

28
29 ADDENDUM: LBN:arm 5/2/56. Irving Ferman called me on the morning of
30 May 1 and advised that he thought the meeting with Norman Thomas was very
31 productive and worthwhile; that Thomas had all but committed himself to do
32 some things for the Sobell Committee and that after leaving here, he told Ferman
33 that he was going to go slow.
34

35
36 I then told Ferman that I had checked up on the request for an
37 investigation in the De Galindez matter and that the Department had sent letter
38 to James C. Stahlman and Norman De Weaver on March 22 which had been made
39 public on March 27. He said he was going to call Thomas immediately on this.
40

41
42 I noticed that Thomas has a letter to the editor of the Washington
43 Post in the May 1 issue referring to the investigation of De Galindez wherein he
44 complains about not having a reply from the Department.
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : Mr. Mohr

DATE: March 2, 1962

FROM : C. D. DeLoach

SUBJECT: NORMAN THOMAS

Tolson ☒
 Belmont ☒
 Mohr ☒
 Callahan ☐
 Conrad ☐
 DeLoach ☐
 Evans ☐
 Malone ☒
 Rosen ☒
 Sullivan ☒
 Tavel ☐
 Trotter ☐
 Tele. Room ☐
 Ingram ☐
 Gandy ☐

see
V.
3-6

By letter dated 2-26-62, Norman Thomas, the well-known perennial candidate of the Socialist Party for the presidency and leader of the Socialist Party, wrote the Director with regard to the fact that the Director was a recipient of an award from the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge. He points out that he knows how strongly the Director is opposed to racism and believes that the Director is opposed to the summary evacuation of Japanese and Japanese-Americans from the west coast in World War II. Thomas wonders whether the Director is well informed about the Freedoms Foundation and indicates that the Foundation has given a number of awards to "Birchites" and others of an extremely reactionary stripe. He quotes Dr. Kenneth D. Wells of the Foundation as stating in a speech in 1958, "I have a daughter in Temple University and she comes home in tears almost every night from the socialistic things she hears there. I believe, and this is not a special case I'm taking either, that the reason for it lies in the fact that of the 35 students in one of her classes, 17 are Jews and 12 are Negroes. That is where these ideologies that are not in keeping with our American heritage are coming from."

Thomas asks the questions as to whether the Director is well informed about the Freedoms Foundation; whether the Director's acceptance of its highest award is inconsistent with his position of opposition to the ultras and concludes by asking the Director if he consider either returning the Freedoms Foundation award or making a statement of disapproval of some of the acts of the donors? Thomas claims he does not want ultra-right extremists to have the Director's blessing.

b7c I talked with [REDACTED] Freedoms Foundation at 4:00 p.m., 3-2-62. I told him of the contents of the Thomas letter. He stated that Thomas was a liar. He advised that the Freedoms Foundation has never knowingly given any award, minor or otherwise, to a member of the John Birch Society. He admitted the possibility that some minor award, among the hundreds given over the years, may have been given to some school teacher or other personality who might later have joined the John Birch Society. He reiterated that they have never knowingly given it to any member of the John Birch Society. I recall that Dr. Wells made this same statement to the Director on 2-22-62 prior to the Director's speech at Valley Forge. I raised the question that Thomas claimed that Dr. Wells had made in a speech in 1958, which Thomas claims appeared in the "Texas Observer" of 12-25-59, "I have a daughter in Temple University---(as mentioned above)." [REDACTED] stated this was an absolute lie.

- 1 - Mr. Jones
- 1 - Mr. Morrell

REC- 2A

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE

3 MAR 21 1962

DeLoach to Mohr 3-2-62
re; Norman Thomas

b7c
He did advise that Wells made the statement, "I have a daughter in Temple University and she comes home in tears almost every night from the socialistic things she hears there." [REDACTED] stated Wells made this statement in connection with the advance of socialism and communism on college campuses.

This is not the first time Norman Thomas has either attacked the Freedoms Foundation or supported an individual who would attack the Foundation. Thomas prepared a foreword for a publication entitled "The American Ultras" by Irwin Suall, National Secretary of the Socialist Party--Social Democratic Federation (SPSDF). This book was extremely critical of "ultra right-wing" or professional anticommunist groups and the book was a subject of a previous memorandum last month. Among organizations attacked in the book was the Freedoms Foundation and the book was critical of the fact that the Director had endorsed the Foundation. Thomas also took occasion to denounce the Freedoms Foundation and Mrs. Alice Widener, who is well known to the Bureau and the publisher of "U.S.A." magazine. He was critical of Widener because of an article that had appeared in her publication and originally Mrs. Widener was to debate Thomas at a mass meeting which Thomas called for 2-23-62 in Philadelphia. The debate was originally to be telecast but in the end Thomas declined to debate anyone except a director of the Freedoms Foundation. The mass meeting was held, however, and several of the SPSDF representatives were the principal speakers. While Mrs. Widener did not attend the meeting she learned that Thomas, during his speech, made slurring remarks on the Freedoms Foundation award conferred on the Director and other representatives of the SPSDF made derogatory references to the Bureau and the Director.

It is noted that earlier this week the Bureau received a copy of a mimeographed publication, "The Delco Veteran," Delaware County, Pennsylvania, which contained views of Thomas regarding the Director's acceptance of the Freedoms Foundation Award. This current letter to the Director from Thomas was described in detail in this publication.

There are thousands of references in Bureau files to Norman Thomas and a perusal of his Main File reflects briefly that, although he has been outspokenly anticommunist at times, he has been either affiliated with or his name associated with many subversive organizations. He contacted former Assistant to the Director Nichols on several occasions here at the Bureau and their conversations were cordial with Thomas indicating a high regard for the FBI. Thomas has favored U. S. recognition of Red China, has at times expressed opposition to anticommunist legislation and joined Mrs. Roosevelt in a plea for the release of communists imprisoned under the Smith Act of 1955. More recently, in 1960, he wrote the U. S. Board of Parole regarding the release of Henry Winston, convicted Smith Act subject. Thomas was desirous of Winston's and Green's, another Smith Act subject, release from prison. (61-10767)

DeLoach to Mohr · 3-2-62
Re: Norman Thomas

RECOMMENDATION:

I do not feel we should dignify Thomas' letter with a reply from the Director or either with an in-absence reply. He is a liar and is deliberately attempting to bait the Director into a controversy that will gain him (Thomas) publicity. This premise is obvious on its face inasmuch as Thomas's referenced letter of 2-26-62 was referred to in "The Delco Veteran" before it was received at FBI Headquarters. Should the Director write Thomas and tell him that the Freedoms Foundation has never knowingly given an award to any member of the John Birch Society, the Director, in effect, is evaluating the John Birch Society publicly to the extent that no member of this organization should ever receive a Freedoms Foundation award. The Director should not be placed in this position. Thomas is a "screwball" and would only use the Director's letter to further publicity for himself.

//

It is recommended his letter be ignored.

right
V.
3-6
HH
7/2/62
V. 10/10/62

Norman Thomas
112 EAST 19th STREET
NEW YORK 3, N.Y.

February 26, 1962

Hon. J. Edgar Hoover, Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington 25, D.C.

Dear Mr. Hoover:

You were recently a recipient of the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge award. I venture to wonder whether you are well informed about that Foundation. I know how strongly you are opposed to racism and, if I remember correctly, you were privately much opposed to the summary evacuation of Japanese and Japanese-Americans from the West coast in World War II.

I have been shown a report from the Texas Observer which would seem to concern the Freedoms Foundation and especially its president, Dr. Kenneth D. Wells. In the Observer's issue of December 20, 1959, Dr. Wells, in a speech to some 300 school teachers in Lampasa, Texas, in November 1958, was quoted as follows: "I have a daughter in Temple University and she comes home in tears almost every night from the socialistic things she hears there. I believe, and this is not a special case I'm taking either, that the reason for it lies in the fact that of the 35 students in one of her classes, 17 are Jews and 12 are Negroes. That is where these ideologies that are not in keeping with our American heritage are coming from."

I am also well informed that the Foundation has given a good number of awards to Birchites and others of an extremely reactionary stripe.

In view of these facts, certain questions arise in my mind: Were you well informed about the Freedoms Foundation? If so, do you not think that your acceptance of its highest award is inconsistent with your own position of opposition to the ultras? Would you, therefore, consider either returning the award or making a statement of your disapproval of some of the acts of the donors?

61-10767-43

REC-24

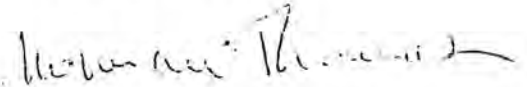
FEB 27 1962

Hon. J. Edgar Hoover, Director

February 26, 1962

I should not raise this question except that I take a very serious view of this ultra-right extremism and do not want it to seem to have your blessing.

Sincerely yours,



Norman^C Thomas

NT:S